

Pupil premium strategy statement – St Cuthbert’s RC High School

This statement details our school’s use of pupil premium funding to help improve the attainment of our disadvantaged pupils.

It outlines our pupil premium strategy, how we intend to spend the funding in this academic year and the outcomes for disadvantaged pupils last academic year.

School overview

Detail	Data
Number of pupils in school	1065
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	44%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers (3-year plans are recommended – you must still publish an updated statement each academic year)	2025-2028
Date this statement was published	December 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	June 2026
Statement authorised by	Emma Keenan
Pupil premium lead	Joanne Holt
Governor / Trustee lead	Mary Chadwick

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£494,500
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable)	£0
Total budget for this academic year <i>If your school is an academy in a trust that pools this funding, state the amount available to your school this academic year</i>	£494,500

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

St Cuthbert's intention is that all students regardless of their background, prior attainment or challenges that they face will make good progress and achieve their best educational outcomes in all areas of the curriculum. The focus for our pupil premium strategy is to ensure that our disadvantaged students are supported in achieving this goal.

We will consider carefully all of the challenges that our disadvantaged students face and seek to implement strategies which will remove the barriers for these young people to achieve the best possible educational outcomes and equip them with the requisite skills to thrive in the wider world.

High impact quality first teaching will be at the heart of our approach to ensure that all learners are provided with an education that supports them in achieving their best. This is proven as the single most important factor in narrowing the attainment gap between disadvantaged students and their non disadvantaged peers. It will also have a positive impact on all students in our school.

Our approach will be rooted in the research conducted within our school around the common challenges and individual needs in our school for our disadvantaged students as detailed below. The approaches we have adopted should allow all of our students to achieve well.

To ensure that our intent and implementation are effective, we will:

- Ensure all students are supported with having good attendance at school
- Act early to identify students who are in need of academic and pastoral interventions
- Adopt an approach in which all staff take responsibility for disadvantaged students outcomes and raise expectations of what students can achieve.

Challenges

This details the key challenges to achievement that we have identified among our disadvantaged pupils.

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	Attendance

	<p>Attendance of our disadvantaged students is significantly lower than that of their non disadvantaged peers. Attainment data shows that this correlates directly attainment. On average students with 95%+ attendance in 2023-24 achieved a grade higher than students with attendance between 90 and 94.9% (students with 90-94% attendance had on average higher prior attainment)</p> <p>Attendance for our disadvantaged students in 2024-25 was 88.2% compared to 92.9% for non disadvantaged students. This was particularly pronounced in Year 11 83.24% (disadvantaged) v 91.25% (Non disadvantaged.)</p>
2	<p>Attainment</p> <p>Attainment data for disadvantaged students is significantly lower than their non disadvantaged peers. A8 score for disadvantaged students in 2025 was 31.28 compared to 42.25 for non disadvantaged students. 53.52% of non disadvantaged students achieved a grade 4+ in English and Maths compared to only 31.25% of disadvantaged students.</p>
3	<p>Behaviour</p> <p>Our behaviour data show us that higher percentage of our disadvantaged learners receive C3 detentions and exclusions. Our PP cohort made up 44% of our cohort in 2024-25, but accounted for 71% of suspensions and 62% of C3 detentions.</p>
4	<p>Reading data</p> <p>Reading data (NGRT reading tests) for our students show a significant disparity between our disadvantaged and non disadvantaged students.</p> <p>29.9% of disadvantaged students did not meet an SAS of 85 plus on their reading score compared to 16.9% of the non disadvantaged cohort with particular issues identified in Years 7, 9 and 11. The reading tests also indicated that 50% of the disadvantaged cohort are reading at a level 7 months or more below their chronological reading age compared to 39% of the non disadvantaged cohort.</p>
5	<p>Disadvantaged learners sense of belonging to the school community and their self worth</p> <p>Stakeholder voice (pass survey, Beewell survey and internal stakeholder voice) show that disadvantaged students feeling about school are lower than their non disadvantaged peers and that they have a perceived learning cap.</p> <p>Teacher referrals for support remain high and are currently require additional support with social and emotional needs and are currently receiving small group interventions/counselling.</p> <p>Enrichment engagement for some groups of disadvantaged learners is not as high as others. The reasons for this need tracking, exploration and key barriers identified and removed</p>
6	<p>Aspirations and support for the future</p> <p>55% of our high priority students for careers interventions (support with college applications, additional careers advisor input and additional college visits) are</p>

	disadvantaged and will require additional support to be successful in applying for and remaining in post 16 education.
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Intended outcomes

This explains the outcomes we are aiming for **by the end of our current strategy plan**, and how we will measure whether they have been achieved.

Intended outcome	Success criteria
To increase attendance rates for disadvantaged students across all year groups	To increase disadvantaged attendance to at least 90% in 2025-26
To increase attainment at KS4 for disadvantaged students.	To increase % of disadvantaged students achieving 5 GCSEs at Grade 4+ including English and Maths to 38% To increase A8 score for disadvantaged students to 36
To reduce the number of detentions and suspensions for disadvantaged students	2024-25 figures: PP detentions – to be less than 60% of the total detentions PP suspensions – to be less than 50% of the suspensions
To increase the number of disadvantaged students that are working at a score of 85 or above on the NGRT tests	Year 7 currently – 66.7% Year 8 currently – 71.6% Year 9 currently – 68.2% Year 10 currently – 77.2% Year 11 currently – 67.2% Overall – 70.1% (Figures on NGRT reading test)
To increase disadvantaged students sense of belonging and self worth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All disadvantaged students to have engaged in at least 1 enrichment activity across the course of the year Improved scores on feelings about school on PASS test Improved wellbeing score from students who have received counselling/mentoring
Raising career aspirations of disadvantaged students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction in NEET figures (currently 2 in Year 12 and 17 in Year 13 – no PP split – aiming to get this information) All Year 11 students to have made appropriate college applications by 1st December 2025 – additional careers

	<p>appointment offered to all high priority disadvantaged students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in number of disadvantaged students who have attended university/college visits • Implementation of work experience
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Activity in this academic year

This details how we intend to spend our pupil premium funding **this academic year** to address the challenges listed above.

Budgeted cost: £ 494,500

Teaching (for example, CPD, recruitment and retention)

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p>‘The Difference’ programme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusion • Improving behaviour management • Quality first teaching <p>Implementation of St Cuthbert’s Way</p>	<p>‘The best available evidence indicates that great teaching is the most important lever schools have to improve pupil attainment. Ensuring every teacher is supported in delivering high-quality teaching is essential to achieving the best outcomes for all pupils, particularly the most disadvantaged among them.’</p> <p>High-quality teaching EEF</p> <p>Effective classroom management can reduce challenging behaviour, pupil disengagement, bullying and aggression. Universal behaviour systems are unlikely to meet the needs of all students. Teachers should be trained in specific strategies if supporting pupils with high behaviour needs.</p> <p>Improving Behaviour in Schools EEF</p>	1,2,3,4,5,6
Year 11 interventions	Targeted interventions to improve students performance in individual subjects with Focus 5 wave 1 interventions in all classrooms and after school interventions for all subject areas.	2

<p><i>Literacy across the curriculum</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>All c4 and s4 classes at KS3 are having a reading and writing intervention (rapid reading) with two teachers (additional teacher in their lesson 3/8 times across the 2 week timetable.</i> • <i>Additionally reading for pleasure once per fortnight in English – based on ks2 tier 2 vocabulary</i> • <i>6 week reading intervention programme in English in all English lessons (blending of phonics and comprehension)</i> • <i>Form time guided reading once per week across all year groups and book discussions.</i> • <i>Reading form in Year 7 and 8 (3 days per week) Reading of books that are at the right reading age.</i> • <i>Small intervention groups based on reading profile. Phonics and comprehension schemes in place for this.</i> 	<p>Reading comprehension strategies – High impact for very low cost based on moderate evidence – 7 months+ Teaching and Learning Toolkit EEF</p>	<p>4</p>
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Targeted academic support (for example, tutoring, one-to-one support, structured interventions)

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p><i>Literacy interventions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>NGRT reading tests</i> • <i>Reading interventions – CBW</i> • <i>Peer tutoring</i> 	<p>Encourage summer reading; these have some promise but are not widely used at present</p> <p>EEF Parental Engagement</p> <p>Peer tutoring – High impact for low cost based on extensive evidence – 6 months</p> <p>Teaching and Learning Toolkit EEF</p>	<p>4</p>
<p><i>Careers Guidance and support (additional sessions booked to support disadvantaged students)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Personal guidance appointments</i> • <i>Visits to college</i> • <i>Visits to universities</i> • <i>Employer engagement</i> • <i>Work experience</i> • <p>(SCY/PFY)</p>	<p>Careers education works best when it is personalised and targeted to individuals' needs. This, together with school-mediated employer engagement alongside independent and impartial career guidance, is key to supporting young people's transitions into education, training and employment.</p> <p>Young people from poorer homes are more likely to be uncertain about the qualifications they need to access their chosen career and get the skills they need.</p> <p>Teenage part-time employment is rapidly in decline: the proportion of British 16 to 17-year-olds combining full-time education with part-time employment has fallen from 42% in 1997 to 18% in 2014. This makes it all the more important for schools, colleges and employers to help young people gain insights, exposure and experiences that traditionally they would have accessed through direct, paid experience of the labour market</p> <p>SYM873648 Careers-Education-Infographic</p> <p>The evidence is clear: embedding good careers guidance into the fabric of a school or college doesn't just help</p>	<p>5,6</p>

	<p>students make more informed choices, it improves outcomes across the board – from attendance and behaviour to attainment, inclusion and wellbeing. When careers guidance is treated as a whole-institution priority, aligned with strategic development plans, it can become a powerful driver of improvement.</p> <p>A New Chapter for Careers Guidance Gatsby Benchmarks</p>	
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Wider strategies (for example, related to attendance, behaviour, wellbeing)

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
<p><i>Attendance Officer – to increase attendance at school for disadvantaged students to include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Attendance mentoring</i> • <i>Home visits</i> • <i>Parental engagement</i> • <i>Attendance cafes</i> • <i>Targeted approaches</i> • <i>Whole school attendance incentives</i> • <i>Regular communications re attendance with parents</i> • <i>Liaison with Year 6 into 7 who already have historic attendance issues</i> 	<p>Academic mentoring and parental engagement have led to improvements in attendance (small scale studies)</p> <p>Well-designed school communications can be effective for improving attainment and a range of other outcomes, such as attendance.</p> <p>EEF – Attendance interventions – Rapid Evidence Assessment - Attendance-REA-report.pdf</p> <p>Plan carefully for group-based parenting initiatives (such as regular workshops). A convenient time and location, face-to-face recruitment, trusting relationships, and an informal, welcoming environment are the most important factors for parents to attend group sessions</p> <p>Working with parents to improve students' learning - EEF Parental Engagement Summary</p>	1, 2, 5
<p><i>Early Help Support – AGD</i></p>	<p>Start by assessing needs and talking to parents about what would help them support learning: targeting is likely to be needed to use resources effectively and avoid widening gaps.</p> <p>Communicate carefully to avoid stigmatising, blaming, or discouraging</p>	

	<p>parents. Focus on building parents' efficacy— that they are equal partners and can make a difference</p> <p>EEF Parental Engagement Summary</p>	
<p><i>Personalised mentoring from Assistant Heads of Year to support reduction in behaviour points of students in their year group.</i></p>	<p>Improving Behaviour in Schools – finds good evidence that personalised approaches, like daily report cards, can improve disruptive pupils' behaviour.</p> <p>The report, which reviews the best available evidence to offer schools six recommendations for improving behaviour, suggests that universal systems are unlikely to work for all students and for those pupils who need more intensive support with their behaviour, a personalised approach is likely to be better.</p>	3,2,5
<p><i>Counselling and RCT interventions</i></p>	<p>Mentoring and counselling have a small impact (2 months average) on academic attainment, but have shown some impact on students developing trusting relationships with an adult or older peer to provide support. Frequent meetings (once a week or more) have most impact.</p> <p>Mentoring EEF</p>	5
<p><i>Increase in provision and tracking of enrichment activities to improve students self confidence and sense of belonging to school</i></p>	<p>Sports and Arts participation is moderate impact for low cost</p> <p>Teaching and Learning Toolkit EEF</p>	5,6

Total budgeted cost: £ 494,500

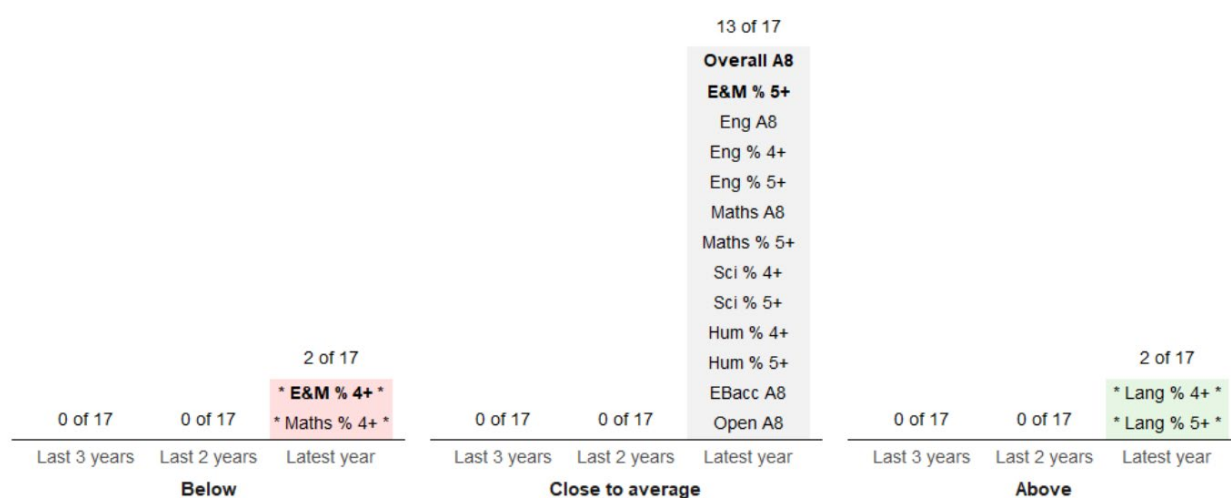
Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

Attainment – Attainment 8 for Year 11 students increased from 27.11 in the autumn term to 32.8 (bringing us close to the average for disadvantage students nationally).

Strong performance with disadvantaged students in Music, PE and Spanish

Subject comparison for disadvantage students to national disadvantaged students:



Attendance – Attendance for FSM6 students increased from 82.4 to 85.8% (classed as close to average for school context), although this is still below expectations, it has shown ‘relative improvement’ on the IDSR. Overall school attendance increased from 87.1% to 89.5% which again is showing ‘relative improvement’

All students had diagnostic testing of their reading ages and this information was presented to staff alongside strategies for promoting reading in curriculum areas to enhance in lesson provision of reading strategies. In form time, all students had access to 2 high quality texts relating to their age and stage of reading to promote reading for pleasure. Reading form in year 8 including 40% disadvantaged students showed reading progress of an average of 32 months in 6 months 2024-2025 academic year

Last year 27 different enrichment activities took place across school with over 40 off site visits to a range of different universities, places of interest and places of work to increase students’ cultural capital. On all of these visits disadvantages students were prioritised with the aim to ensure that 60% of the visitors were disadvantaged.

In Year 12 there are currently only 2 NEET students (unknown at the time of writing) and 233/244 Year 11 students had made applications to college by October half term. All high priority students had at least 2 careers interviews with an independent careers advisor to support excellent choices for the next steps of their education, employment or training.

Externally provided programmes

Please include the names of any non-DfE programmes that you used your pupil premium to fund in the previous academic year.

Programme	Provider